

Introduction

Ethnographic fieldwork is anthropology's crucible. During fieldwork, as Jean E. Jackson (1990, 29) observes, "one must work out one's relationship to the field, to the natives, and to one's mind and emotions (as data-gathering instruments and as bias-producing impediments)." Fieldwork is at once a scientific pursuit that draws upon shared techniques and technologies and an intensively personal experience that is always unique. Anthropologists have written and taught about fieldwork from anthropology's earliest days as an academic discipline. Most students now must take training courses in ethnographic methods and read a wide variety of case studies before undertaking their own fieldwork. Historians have done much to reveal the connections (and disconnections) between fieldwork – with all of its ambiguities and compromises – and authoritative ethnographic monographs penned after the return from the field. All of the studies, courses, and critiques have done little to demystify the fieldwork experience itself, however. It remains for most anthropologists at the defining centre of the discipline – a rite of passage that at once engenders personal transformation and provides insight into alien cultural ways. Fieldwork moulds both the anthropologist and the products of his/her intellectual labours.

T.F. McIlwraith, who, along with Marius Barbeau, was one of the pioneers of Canadian anthropology, certainly understood fieldwork in this way. In 1948 he published *The Bella Coola Indians*, regarded as one of the finest ethnographies ever written about a Northwest Coast people.

As with most ethnographers of that time and since, he restricted his discussion of the fieldwork upon which it was based to a few notes in the Preface. But he took great delight in telling about his experiences among the Nuxalk people of Bella Coola in other venues – in a magazine article (reproduced in this volume), in academic conferences, before students, and in addresses to popular audiences. As befits a splendidly comprehensive and thematically coherent study, McIlwraith's fieldwork experiences were remarkable. He had arrived in Bella Coola in the twilight years of the old culture, when a handful of elders still lived in the richly adorned longhouses of their ancestors. He gained their trust, becoming a sort of repository into which they poured ancestral mythologies, histories, songs, and details about ceremonials, religion, and social organization. Capping it all, he had the extraordinary good fortune not only to witness but also to participate in the winter ceremonies of a Northwest Coast secret society.

Over the course of two stints of fieldwork in Bella Coola, totalling almost eleven months between 1922 and 1924, McIlwraith wrote about the progress of his work and his experience in weekly letters to his family, less regularly to his professors at Cambridge University and his employer in Ottawa. Written with a keen eye for telling detail, a clear prose style, and an engaging wit, the letters provide a vivid record of his experiences and open a precious window onto the character of anthropological fieldwork on the Northwest Coast during this period. The letters enhance the value of *The Bella Coola Indians* by allowing us to better understand the underlying research upon which it was based. But the importance of the letters goes well beyond their connection to anthropology. They are invaluable historical records for Bella Coola in general and for the Nuxalk Nation in particular. McIlwraith's correspondence gives readers a unique glimpse into life in a frontier community, then divided equally between First Nations peoples and White settlers. Even more important, they contain priceless information about the grandparents and great-grandparents of today's Nuxalk, a generation that took crucial steps towards saving the memory of their past culture when all appeared to be lost.

Although written eight decades ago, the letters remain fresh and engaging. They require no introduction to be enjoyed and appreciated. My aim here is to provide readers interested in exploring the greater significance of McIlwraith's correspondence with some background information and discussion about the letters' implications for our understandings of the evolution of anthropological fieldwork and our perspectives on the fate of indigenous peoples. I begin below with a brief

biography and description of the setting within which McIlwraith carried out his fieldwork. I then turn to a more extended discussion of what the letters reveal about Aboriginal-White relations in Bella Coola in the early 1920s, about the working assumptions underlying McIlwraith's field methods, and about the critical role certain Nuxalk elders played in shaping the anthropologist's understanding of their cultural traditions. As a work of "salvage anthropology" that aimed to describe Nuxalk traditions as they may have existed before the arrival of Whites, *The Bella Coola Indians* neglects the contemporary conditions under which the people actually lived and denies them a role as active agents who shaped their own destinies within the confines of colonialism. The letters open a door to a historical critique of *The Bella Coola Indians* – not to denounce the work as flawed but to reclaim it as an essential part of a living and continuously evolving Nuxalk culture.

T.F. McILWRAITH'S LIFE AND WORK¹

Thomas Forsyth McIlwraith was born on 9 April 1899 in Hamilton, Ontario, to Mary and Thomas McIlwraith, a local coal importer. He attended the private Highfield School for Boys in Hamilton and then studied for a year at McGill University. Upon turning eighteen he applied to join the officer corps as part of the First World War effort. He undertook the requisite training in Toronto and Cambridge, was commissioned as a second lieutenant with the King's Own Scottish Borderers, and was sent to France in October 1918, shortly before the Armistice was signed and before (to his disappointment) seeing any action. McIlwraith then moved with his battalion into Germany and stayed on as an assistant education officer until demobilization in 1919.

Reluctant to return immediately to Canada, McIlwraith inquired about joining the British Colonial Service. While on leave in Cambridge, he had met Alfred Cort Haddon and W.H.R. Rivers, the two most prominent British anthropologists of the day, who encouraged him to include anthropology in his training for the service. Aided with an Imperial Settlement Scholarship and a year's credit from McGill, McIlwraith arrived at Cambridge University in September 1919 to begin two intensive years of anthropological study. He quickly developed a passion for museum work, spending many hours sorting through the extensive ethnological collection in the Cambridge Museum. By the time he completed the new Anthropology Tripos, with a first class standing, McIlwraith had set his sights on an academic career. He was awarded a scholarship, which enabled him to teach during the fall of 1921 and promised the prestigious Anthony

Wilken Scholarship for the following year. McIlwraith began making tentative plans for field research in New Guinea, where both Haddon and Rivers had previously conducted their fieldwork.

The American anthropologist Paul Radin now intervened. A superb fieldworker, Radin had worked under contract to the Anthropology Division at the Victoria Memorial Museum in Ottawa for several seasons. He met McIlwraith while a visiting professor at Cambridge and, much taken by the young man's enthusiasm and ability, urged him to write to the division chief, Edward Sapir (like Radin, a student of Franz Boas and a close friend), to see if a position might be available. None was; however, impressed by Radin's endorsement, Sapir offered McIlwraith a contractual appointment to carry out a few months' fieldwork: "You would do well to tackle the Bella Coola Indians of British Columbia: Mr. H.I. Smith, our archaeologist, has spent two seasons among them on technological research. I would suggest, subject to his eventual agreement, that you take up the non-material aspects of Bella Coola culture with special reference to social organization."² With Haddon's blessing, McIlwraith accepted.

Sapir was not able to fund the position until the end of January. McIlwraith lingered on at Cambridge through the Michaelmas term, giving lectures on African ethnology and installing a Uganda collection in the museum. After a holiday in Italy, he departed from England on 8 February 1922 and spent much of the next month on trains. He visited New York, where he had a brief and rather unencouraging encounter with Franz Boas (who had briefly worked in Bella Coola in 1897) before returning home to Hamilton. While in Toronto, he had lunch with the president of the University of Toronto, Sir Robert Falconer, and was interviewed by Playfair McMurrich (a professor of anatomy) and Charles Trick Currelly (the director of the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology) for a possible position as an anthropologist. From there, he visited Ottawa, where he had a helpful talk with Harlan I. Smith, the museum's archaeologist. Almost an habitué of the Pacific coast, Smith gave him some suggestions about living arrangements and informants in Bella Coola, where Smith himself intended to return later that summer. On the evening of 9 March, McIlwraith descended the gangplank of the SS *Camosun* as it lay aside the steamer wharf at Bella Coola, some 500 kilometres north of Vancouver. He was a month shy of his twenty-third birthday.

McIlwraith stayed in Bella Coola until early August, amassing a huge quantity of fieldnotes on the Bella Coola Indians (now known as the Nuxalk). Had the University of Toronto job come through, his research

in Bella Coola would likely have concluded at this point, but it did not. Fortunately, Sapir scraped up some money to allow him to organize and transcribe his notes and offered him a contract for a second season of fieldwork, which was to commence in the spring of 1923. McIlwraith was set to go when his mother was diagnosed with cancer. He delayed his departure until a month after his mother died (which was in August). Already in mourning, upon his return to Bella Coola he was shocked to learn that his favourite informant, Captain Schooner, with whom he had become very close, had died only a few weeks earlier. He thus found himself back in the community during the winter ceremonial season and, as one of Captain Schooner's heirs, obliged to participate in the proceedings. At first his participation was limited to some dancing and speech making. Soon after, however, the Nuxalk arranged for him to write down songs composed for the dances and to act as a prompter for the choir accompanying the dancers. All in all, his involvement in the ceremonials was a demanding honour, often requiring his presence in the community hall from early evening until the small hours of the morning throughout the six-week ceremonies. McIlwraith brought his fieldwork to a conclusion in February by recording a large collection of Nuxalk songs on wax cylinders. He left in March, never to return.

Upon returning to Hamilton, McIlwraith spent the next few months writing up his notes, supported by another small grant from Ottawa, while looking for a job. He had just taken up a limited-term research position at the new Institute of Psychology at Yale University when the Toronto position finally received funding. McIlwraith had time to complete a report on shamanism and a rough draft of his Bella Coola manuscript before returning to Ontario to marry Beulah Gillet Knox, a long-time family acquaintance, and begin his new career as lecturer in anthropology and keeper of the ethnological collections of the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology.

It was for many years a demanding and lonely post. McIlwraith immediately plunged into a schedule split between managing the extensive ethnological collection at the museum and giving lectures in a wide range of anthropological courses. In 1933 the University of Toronto financed a second position in anthropology and, at long last, officially created a Department of Anthropology in 1936, to which McIlwraith was appointed professor and head. Although the entire staff hovered between two and three men before the war, the new department managed to initiate a popular archaeological program along with courses in social anthropology and material culture. McIlwraith's major achievement during these years was to organize, with C.T. Loram of Yale, the first international

conference in Indian welfare, hosted at the University of Toronto for two weeks in 1943 (Loram and McIlwraith 1943).

Meanwhile, McIlwraith encountered numerous obstacles in his attempts to publish his *Bella Coola* monograph. The manuscript was huge – over 1,800 typed pages – and, given the specialized typographical characters required for the Nuxalk language, technically difficult to produce. Sapir left the museum in 1925 but fortunately his successor, Diamond Jenness, was willing to work through the manuscript with McIlwraith. In those days the Anthropology Division and the museum itself were part of the Geological Survey of Canada. In the past, the division had provoked the ire of senior geologists and some politicians by publishing monographs containing explicit descriptions of sexual activities. Warned by Sapir and Jenness, McIlwraith had taken the precaution of having the more explicit passages of Nuxalk narratives translated into Latin. This proved inadequate. The supervisor of government publications came across the first chapters of *The Bella Coola Indians* as they were being set for printing. Scandalized, he sent them back to Jenness, declaring “that Latin was no better than English, and [he] would admit neither.”⁷³ Jenness and McIlwraith went over the entire manuscript, eliminating the most offensive passages and rendering still more into Latin. The exercise seems to have done little more than confirm to the director of the museum and to the deputy minister responsible that the Anthropology Division harboured pornographers and perhaps should be eliminated. After a lengthy conference, the parties agreed to publish part of the manuscript. The first volume was actually set to be printed in 1930 but was cancelled when the museum had its budget slashed at the start of the Depression. This is where matters and the manuscript stood until the early 1940s, when the Canadian Social Science Research Council, of which McIlwraith was a founding member, offered a subvention to University of Toronto Press to publish the monograph. *The Bella Coola Indians* eventually appeared as a two-volume work in 1948, the censored and translated passages all fully restored, more than twenty years after it had first been written (Barker 1992).

McIlwraith never again carried out ethnographic research; instead, he threw himself into administrative and public work in Toronto. In 1950 the Royal Ontario Museum and the Department of Anthropology were formally separated, and the dormant anthropology program began to grow rapidly. As head, McIlwraith oversaw the founding of both honours and graduate programs in anthropology. In addition, he filled key roles in several government commissions and private organizations, addressing historical, archaeological, and conservation issues. In the early

1960s he toured parts of the Canadian Arctic as a technical advisor to the Department of Indian Affairs. Soon afterwards he fell ill. McIlwraith died in Toronto in 1964, shortly before his mandatory retirement from the department he had founded. During all these years, he did not revisit Bella Coola; however, it is clear from the reminiscences of his students and friends that his experiences as a young man living with the Nuxalk formed a key part of his identity as an anthropologist and as a teacher. *The Bella Coola Indians* is the work of an energetic and gifted ethnographer. Despite the central role McIlwraith took with regard to the institutionalization of academic anthropology in Canada, he will likely be mostly remembered for this remarkable study.

THE SETTING

The landscape of the traditional territory of the Nuxalk Nation is dense with sacred meaning. At the beginning of time, *Áquntäm*,⁴ the creator, created Carpenters who, in turn, carved and painted all things in their original home in the heavens, *Nusmät-a*, “The Place of Myths.” The first



Bella Coola township on North Bentinck Arm facing south, 24 June 1921. The Indian reserve lies to the north of the Bella Coola River, on the left side of the photograph.

human beings selected a cloak of an animal or bird from the walls of *Nusmät-a* before descending to the earth. From their landings on the mountaintops, they sent the cloaks back and then climbed down to settle in the valley. Nuxalk hold that the ancestors' names, their associated cloaked forms, and their places of landing and settlement form an eternal and inalienable unity. Throughout their lives people inherit ancestral names and associated prerogatives, place names, and histories. These names must be validated before witnesses at potlatches and then released to succeeding generations upon the deaths of their temporal custodians (Kirk 1986, 41; McIlwraith 1948 I, chap. 2).

The Bella Coola Indians attempts to reconstruct Nuxalk religion and social organization as they may have existed prior to the great nineteenth-century epidemics that decimated the population and the arrival of White settlers who displaced the Nuxalk from most of their lands. It describes an intensely spiritual terrain inhabited solely by the Nuxalk and their deities. The terrain in which McIlwraith worked and from which he wrote his letters was very different. He lived in a boarding house in the White township, walking a total of six kilometres or so a day to visit Nuxalk informants living either in new frame houses on a reserve or in the decayed remains of a traditional village at the mouth of the Bella Coola River. A rough wagon road led deep into the valley, past small White homesteads, up to a village settled by a colony of hardy Norwegians. Whites and Aboriginal people alike now exploited the great marine and forest resources of the region, working for new canneries and lumber mills. Almost all of these changes had occurred within living memory.

The people McIlwraith knew as the Bella Coola Indians⁵ were among the first of the coastal Aboriginal cultures to be described in any detail by European visitors. In July 1793, about a month after Captain George Vancouver's crew made a brief landing in the west, Alexander Mackenzie entered the Bella Coola valley from the east at the end of his epic overland journey to the Pacific Ocean. At that time, the Nuxalk – to use their modern name – occupied as many as twenty villages along the lower Bella Coola River, North and South Bentinck Arms, Dean Channel, and Kwatna Inlet (Kennedy and Bouchard 1990, 323). Lacking any overall political order, the villages shared a common language, social organization, and ceremonial system. Nuxalk is a Salishan language; but the Nuxalk society and culture more closely resembled neighbouring Heiltsuk (Bella Bella) and Kwakwaka'wakw (Southern Kwakiutl) societies than the distant Coast Salish societies far to the south. Like all Aboriginal peoples in what is now British Columbia, during the nineteenth century

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the Nuxalk suffered a horrendous loss of life to introduced diseases. Boyd (1990, 136) estimates that a pre-contact population of 2,910 had dropped to 402 by 1868. By the time McIlwraith arrived, the population had reached its lowest point – around 300 people – and had begun a slow increase.

Following first contact, Nuxalk gradually abandoned their traditional villages to concentrate along the lower Bella Coola River. This came, in part, as a response to the collapse of the population. But the survivors also wished to live closer to the Hudson's Bay Company trading post (which operated from 1867 to 1882) and the new Methodist mission (which was begun in 1883). The government's reduction of Indian lands to tiny reserves during the 1880s accelerated the process. As the White population in the area grew, the Nuxalk found seasonal work at small canneries and logging operations. Most Nuxalk settled on a reserve on the north side of the Bella Coola River across from the old trading post and the decaying village of *Qomqo-ts*. In 1922 Kimsquit, the last of the outlying villages, was abandoned. Before this time there was no general name for the people. Following consolidation, they began to refer to themselves collectively as Nuxalkmx, the traditional name for the people of the Bella Coola valley. Around 1980 this was modernized to the present "Nuxalk" (Kennedy and Bouchard 1990, 338).

White traders began visiting Bella Coola regularly in the mid-nineteenth century, after the establishment of a Hudson's Bay Company trading post at Bella Bella in 1843. Permanent settlement came in 1867, when a Hudson's Bay Company post was opened in Bella Coola itself on the south side of the river's mouth. In 1878 an adventurous young Englishman, John Clayton, travelled overland from the Cariboo gold fields to work at the trading post. By 1885 he had bought out the company's interests in both Bella Bella and Bella Coola. By 1894 the White population had grown to about sixteen (Kopas 1974, 238). That year they were joined by the first eighty-four members of a new colony of Norwegian immigrants, who had decided to leave their new homes in the depressed agricultural economy of Minnesota for the promise of free lands in a fjord-like setting in Bella Coola. With some aid from the provincial government, the settlers constructed a wagon road into the interior. Most settled about thirty-two kilometres inland from the sea at a place they christened Hagensborg; however, a few established homesteads closer to Clayton's residence in the old Hudson's Bay Company post. Clayton remained by far the largest landowner, having acquired much of the flat land at the southern end of the river when the Bella Coola reserve was laid out several years earlier. He became the foremost

entrepreneur of the area, running the largest general store and setting up the first cannery as well as a local shipping service.

In 1904 the provincial government built a new wharf on the south shore of the inlet. However, in order to cut off competition to his store from Norwegian entrepreneurs (especially from the Brynildsen family, who had built a general store on the edge of his land), John Clayton refused to grant a right of way through his property. The province decided to relocate the wharf and lay a new townsite on the north shore of North Bentinck Inlet just beyond the Necleetsconnay River, about three kilometres west of the reserve. The Christensen and Brynildsen families relocated their general stores from up the valley to the new settlement. Boosted by the arrival of new settlers lured by the government's offer of free land and intense speculation that Bella Coola would soon be developed as a railway terminus and port,⁶ by the time of the outbreak of the First World War the town boasted two canneries, a sawmill, several stores (including a bakery), a hotel, a local telephone system, a police outpost, and a lively newspaper (the *Courier*). The new prosperity allowed the town fathers to sponsor a small hospital and a community hall (although not the one where McIlwraith would later attend dances). But the boom soon turned to bust with the opening of the Prince Rupert terminus of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway in 1914. After a series of floods in the early 1920s, it became clear that the town would need to be moved. During the boom years, speculators had bought up most of the Clayton estate, which was now acquired by the provincial government and developed as a new townsite. By 1929 the White community had shifted buildings to the new site. In 1936, following a flood that washed away the bridge across the Bella Coola River, the Nuxalk village moved to the old village site adjacent to the White community.

THE LETTERS

Letters can be a way of occasionally righting the balance as, for an hour or so, one relates oneself to people who are part of one's other world and tries to make a little more real for them this world which absorbs one, waking and sleeping.

— Margaret Mead, *Letters from the Field, 1925-1975*

Anthropologists generate several types of documents during the course of fieldwork. Most contain the "data" from which later ethnographic works will be constructed: transcriptions of texts related by "informants" (e.g., oral traditions and interviews); scratch notes jotting down observations and ideas as they occur; fieldnotes proper, in which the ethnographer

simultaneously records and orders information while taking the first steps towards a more comprehensive understanding of her/his material (these useful categories are suggested by Sanjek 1990b). Fieldworkers may also create additional non-discursive forms of documentation, such as photographs, audio recordings, films, and so forth. Finally, most people write letters from the field to family, friends, professors, and colleagues; and many also keep journals and diaries. Letters and diaries, far more than more direct forms of documentation, tend to reveal the experiential and personal aspects of fieldwork. Diaries are private places, written for oneself in the immediacy of the moment. In some cases – Bronislaw Malinowski's diaries and Boas's journals come to mind – diaries reveal a great deal about the personality of the fieldworker and the nature of the fieldwork situation; but they are often very cryptic to those who come across them in archives. Letters are another matter. As Margaret Mead observed in the epigraph opening this section, it is in letters that anthropologists start the task of explaining the cultures they are studying. Letters may be personal and immediate, but they are not as personal and immediate as diaries. They are reports from the field that provide a crucial historical link between historical experience and the research process itself.

McIlwraith wrote most of his research notes as transcriptions of interviews and narratives, taken down as they were dictated and later annotated, sometimes quite heavily. He rarely dates the notes or indicates his informant, reducing their usefulness for reconstructing his fieldwork experience. If he kept a diary, it has long been lost. His letters thus give the most detailed and informative chronicle of his time in Bella Coala – one that both expands upon his published comments and contributes much additional information.

Sunday provided the best opportunity for writing letters as the Nuxalk refused to antagonize the missionary by working on the Sabbath. McIlwraith also took advantage of breaks in interviews and evenings during the week, often racing to complete his letters to meet the weekly coastal steamer that provided the main link to the outside world. Most of his letters to his family have survived, and it is they that make up the bulk of this collection. He also wrote periodic reports to Sapir concerning the progress of his research as well as detailed and frank summaries to Haddon. The latter were written after he returned to his family home in Hamilton at the conclusion of the first and second seasons of fieldwork. The collection is rounded out with shorter letters written while in the field to Haddon, Rivers, and other figures at Cambridge as well as to Harlan Smith. This leads to some repetition of subject matter; for example, in his correspondence of 1923-4 McIlwraith returns repeatedly

to his involvement in the winter ceremonials. But he was very attuned to the interests of his different readers, never simply copying sections of one letter into another. The correspondence as a whole thus provides a variety of perspectives, enriching our understanding of their author's experiences and observations.

McIlwraith relied almost entirely upon informant testimonies for the materials making up *The Bella Coola Indians*. The subtle and insightful analysis provided in that book, particularly in the chapters dealing with religion and social organization, demonstrate that he was more than a mere scribe. But it is only with the letters that we come to appreciate the full scope of his talent, particularly his ability to earn the respect and cooperation of the Nuxalk elders and his keen eye for observation. The letters provide information on the contemporary lives of the Nuxalk, material that McIlwraith largely omits from his study. Furthermore, the letters greatly deepen our understanding of the fieldwork that generated the material and the insights that later became *The Bella Coola Indians*, and they help us to better appreciate the strengths as well as the limitations of that ethnography. Last, but certainly not least, they provide intriguing clues that support a Nuxalk-based understanding of that First Nation's history in the early twentieth century – an understanding that is at odds with McIlwraith's own pessimistic assessment.

CONTEMPORARY CONDITIONS

Like other anthropologists of his day, McIlwraith came to Bella Coola to salvage what information he could on Nuxalk culture as it existed prior to extensive European influence. *The Bella Coola Indians* is largely silent about contemporary conditions, but the letters are more forthcoming, permitting a partial and fragmentary glimpse of Bella Coola at a critical moment of transition for the Nuxalk people. The physical links with the pre-European past were then rapidly disappearing, and the local White population had steadily increased to a point where they outnumbered the Nuxalk. A handful of old people, several stubbornly resisting baptism, continued to live in the ruins of the old village, but most of the Nuxalk now dwelled in single-frame family houses on the reserve across the river. McIlwraith suggests that they enjoyed a modestly comfortable lifestyle by combining several months of paid work in the late spring and summer – as fishers, loggers, and cannery workers – with more traditional subsistence and leisure activities, especially during the winter. They had, in his opinion, an extraordinarily high tolerance for dirt and germs; however, he does not seem to have considered the population to be abnormally unhealthy. Even the instances he describes of drunkenness, mostly

from imbibing a potent homemade wine, pale in comparison with the self-destructive alcoholism evinced by several Whites. The church and a popular brass band provided a focus for many community functions, along with traditional ceremonials and potlatching, which were now performed in a recently constructed community hall on the reserve. In his early letters, and even more so in the concluding chapter of *The Bella Coola Indians*, McIlwraith insists that younger men had nothing but contempt for the traditions of their ancestors. However, until the early 1930s, no Nuxalk had to leave Bella Coola to attend residential school. Children retained their language, grew up with their parents, and were nurtured within a dense network of intermarried kin groups.

The letters also open an intriguing window onto the various groups of White settlers residing in the Bella Coola region. McIlwraith had little to do with the Norwegians (with the exception of Andy Christensen, the son of his landlord, with whom he became good friends). Most of the Norwegians at this time were eking out a living as farmers, loggers, or operators of small local businesses like the Christensen general store. McIlwraith felt more comfortable in the company of the few Anglo-Canadians in the area. He became particularly close to Bert Robson and the Clayton family, perhaps because they came closer in education and outlook to his own background than did others but also because, with their long involvement in trading on the coast, they spoke Chinook jargon (the simplified trade language of the coast) and were comfortable around the Nuxalk. At that time the Robson and Clayton families resided on John Clayton's old estate and probably shared McIlwraith's opinion of the Norwegians. John Clayton's widow Elizabeth, for instance, so opposed the marriage of her daughter to Andy Christensen that the two contemplated eloping (with McIlwraith's reluctant connivance). Life in this frontier settlement could be rough. McIlwraith describes a number of instances of serious alcohol and drug abuse, particularly on the part of the local doctor. But the community was not without law or a social life. The town supported its own tiny police force as well as a court, and it sponsored community dances at the town hall.

In the early 1920s the Nuxalk and White communities appeared to be more than physically separated. When the first European settlers entered the Bella Coola valley, they had depended upon the Nuxalk residents to supply them with transportation as well as with fur and fish for trade. Now the dependencies had begun to reverse, with Nuxalk working as employees in the new canneries and mills. Few Whites seemed to have much to do with them, including, according to McIlwraith, the two representatives of Canadian authority over Aboriginal peoples. He describes

the missionary as an “amiable fool” who had not bothered to learn Chinook and thus could not communicate directly with his charges. And the Indian agent never went near the reserve unless there was trouble. The Nuxalk, apparently at the request of the missionary, occasionally invited their White neighbours to performances featuring masked dancers and the brass band, but this hospitality does not seem to have been reciprocated. McIlwraith mentions Whites attending a few of the ceremonials he himself witnessed, but he felt that in general the settlers were at best indifferent to, and often contemptuous of, the Nuxalk and their traditions. At times he took a malicious delight in transgressing boundaries. For example, in a letter to Harlan Smith he describes surprising the Whites in the audience at a Christmas show by performing a traditional dance with some Nuxalk and then delivering a song and speech. “Needless to say the whites thought I was a damn fool, but they do anyway, especially as I have quarreled with almost all the community” (TFM to Smith, 7 January 1924).

FIELDWORK

McIlwraith’s main concern in the letters, of course, is his progress on the project of documenting Nuxalk religion and social organization. And this was impressive by any measure. His first letters from Bella Coola, written only five days after arriving, show him hard at work recording information from Joshua Moody, who remained his primary informant for the next month. Although it was at times difficult to find Nuxalk elders who were available and/or willing to talk, he managed to amass a huge quantity of data during the first season, often working for nine or more hours a day. He allowed himself to slow down somewhat during the second season, but even so he added considerably to his collection of texts and his deeper knowledge of traditional Nuxalk culture. McIlwraith clearly possessed a remarkable capacity for focused intellectual labour. He hit the ground running upon his arrival, which suggests that he came with a clear notion of the kind of information he needed and how to get it.

He received his main brief from the Anthropology Division at the Victoria Memorial Museum. The Canadian government had established the division in 1910 in order to undertake a survey of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples. This was in response to a resolution of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS), which stated:

that with the rapid development of the country, the native population is inevitably losing its separate existence and characteristics; that it is therefore of urgent importance to initiate, without delay, systematic observations and records of native

physical types, languages, beliefs and customs, and to provide for the preservation of a complete collection of examples of native arts and industries in some central institution. (Quoted in Burke 1993, 92-3)

Prior to this, the BAAS had created the Committee on the North-western Tribes of Canada and had hired a young German geographer, Franz Boas, to work on the Northwest Coast for five periods of fieldwork between 1888 and 1894 (Cole 1973). Boas continued to focus upon the Northwest Coast after finding a permanent position at Columbia University. He did this by working with part-Aboriginal collaborators such as George Hunt in Alert Bay (who recorded and sent indigenous texts to him), by sending associates and students to conduct their own fieldwork in the region, and by visiting on numerous occasions (as late as 1931) (Rohner 1969). Edward Sapir, one of Boas's most gifted students, built the Anthropology Division according to his teacher's vision of the discipline; that is, as an intensively empirical endeavour. The division's anthropologists carried out extensive fieldwork across the country, but the Northwest Coast continued to be given special priority – as much for building the museum's collection as for documenting cultures. Most of the permanent staff, including Sapir himself, carried out research on the Northwest Coast.

The Nuxalk had been the object of intermittent anthropological attention throughout this period.⁷ In 1885, under directions from the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin to recruit Northwest Coast Indians for a living exhibition, the Norwegian brothers J. Adrian and Phillip B. Jacobsen convinced nine Nuxalk, who were travelling via Victoria to work in the hopfields of Washington State, to go to Germany instead. Between their public performances across Germany, a number of scientists, including Franz Boas (fresh from his first fieldwork on Baffin Island), studied their language, stories, and music (Cole 1982; Cole 1985, 72). The following year Boas ran into two of the troop members in Victoria, who assisted him at the start of his survey of coastal societies.⁸ This early work resulted in several short publications on mythology, masks, and ceremonialism. In 1897 Boas spent about two weeks in Bella Coola itself, during which time he recorded, from a single unnamed Nuxalk, most of the texts that make up *The Mythology of the Bella Coola Indians*, which was published the following year. The Jacobsens also lived in Bella Coola around 1890, during which time they observed and wrote short articles on Nuxalk mythology and ceremonies. As we have seen, beginning in 1920 Harlan I. Smith made four trips to Bella Coola and the Interior to study material culture and to collect for the museum. This resulted in a

few short articles, but Smith's copious and mostly unreadable fieldnotes remain unpublished to this day. In 1897 Boas had been impressed by the unusual complexity of Nuxalk cosmology, and he recognized the need for more systematic research into the rich religious and ceremonial system of that culture. Sapir himself had played with the idea of working in Bella Coola and, in 1916, tried without success to hire Paul Radin. McIlwraith was thus brought on board to fill in a long-recognized gap in Northwest Coast ethnology.

By the time McIlwraith arrived in Bella Coola, the basic routines of anthropological fieldwork had been established for more than half a century. Fieldworkers rarely "lived with the Indians, participated in their daily routines, or learned their language" (Rohner 1969, xxviii). They usually stayed at a local hotel or boarding house within walking distance of Aboriginal communities. They observed and documented customary rituals if these happened to occur while they were in the field – sometimes they would sponsor them for this purpose – but they relied primarily upon employed informants who were paid a set rate to provide ethnological information and translations. Usually, fieldworkers worked in a place for no more than a few weeks before moving on. Fieldwork was principally a matter of collecting various types of things – objects for museum display, measurements of physical types, texts of stories and songs, customary routines for curing, and so forth. The task of making sense of the patterning of a culture, if it were taken up at all, tended to be taken up after the ethnologist returned from the field.



Main street of old Bella Coola (ᑕᓄᓄᓄᓄᓄᓄ), 1897. Twenty-five years later only a handful of elderly people continued to live in and among the deteriorating long houses. Most Nuxalk had resettled in European-style single family dwellings on the Indian reserve across the river.

In general, McIlwraith's fieldwork conformed with the established procedures of what has since become known as "salvage ethnography" (Gruber 1970). His letters help us to see how such methods actually worked in the field as well as some of their consequences for the relationship between the anthropologist and his subjects. Probably before he even arrived in Bella Coola, or certainly not long thereafter, McIlwraith determined that the culture was largely moribund. He thus relied for his information almost exclusively upon a small number of elders whom he hired to talk to him at the rate of forty cents per hour. The job of informant required more than knowledge of traditional Nuxalk ways. The best informants needed to be available to work long hours, and they needed to have the ability and patience to dictate narratives, answer questions about a wide range of customs, and aid in clarifying key Nuxalk ideas. The letters suggest that McIlwraith worked mostly with five people: Joshua Moody, Jim Pollard, Captain Schooner, Mary Mack, and "Steamboat" Annie (Mrs. Tallio Charlie). Finding and keeping informants was a persistent preoccupation. He chafed when informants went off to fish, plant potatoes – indeed, sometimes even when they participated in ceremonies – as this tended to stop the steady flow of information. Keeping a good informant at times proved challenging. They became bored, annoyed by some of the questions, worried that neighbours would suspect that they were telling stories to which they had no rights. Once he started getting information, McIlwraith also had to be concerned about quality control. He attempted to sift "corrupting" elements (e.g., Moody's frequent references to the Bible) out of the testimonies he recorded, and he checked information with as wide a number of elders as he could. While necessary, this cross-checking sometimes had the unfortunate side effect of stirring up old animosities between Nuxalk who claimed the same ancestral names and associated ceremonial rights.

Nothing illustrates the underlying assumptions of salvage fieldwork better than McIlwraith's account of the various ceremonies he witnessed and in which he participated, particularly the six weeks of winter dances in 1923-4 when, as the late Schooner's adopted son, he became a full participating member and performer. It would be hard to imagine a more romantic invocation of the idea of anthropological fieldwork as a rite of passage. McIlwraith tells the story of his participation well, with a compelling mix of vivid detail concerning backstage business; descriptions of the masks and performances; and self-deprecating comments about his own wobbly attempts to make speeches in Nuxalk, to sing traditional songs, and to dance. Participating in the ceremonials was a personal triumph as it was a clear indication that he was trusted by the Nuxalk

elders. And yet in many of the letters, especially those written to other anthropologists, McIlwraith often comes across as apologetic, even defensive, about his involvement in the ceremonies. In the spring of 1922, when he could not have anticipated seeing the winter ceremonies, he was already explaining to Sapir that they “are only generate survivals of the old dances” suitable mainly as “a jumping off-place for studying the old” (27 May 1922). He confirmed this opinion the following year, complaining to Sapir that his obligation to attend and participate in the ceremonies “interferes very seriously with my work” (26 December 1923). Clearly, he assumed that the senior anthropologist would agree. And, in fact, the detailed descriptions of the winter ceremonies that appear in *The Bella Coola Indians* were drawn almost exclusively from informant testimonies, mostly recorded during the first season. McIlwraith took great joy in recounting his participation in the ceremonies before general audiences and his students,⁹ but he left the only detailed record of this involvement buried in private letters to his family and associates.

McIlwraith (1948) later insisted that, as a Cambridge-trained man, he pursued a markedly different style of fieldwork from that adopted in American anthropology. The correspondence clearly shows that, while he did indeed take his lead from Cambridge, this resulted in a modification of, rather than in a break with, the standard approach and underlying assumptions of salvage anthropology. Dissatisfied with the limitations of regional ethnographic surveys, the typical approach of the time, Haddon and Rivers had advocated a new approach, dubbed “the intensive study of limited areas,” which required the anthropologist to live among his/her subjects for at least a year, learning their language, winning their trust, and thus working towards a comprehensive understanding of their culture (Stocking 1983). This model presumed that the anthropologist was studying a “living” culture, and it would find its most brilliant and compelling expression in Bronislaw Malinowski’s statement about, and demonstration of, participant observation in *The Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922). This book is regarded by many as the first example of a modern anthropological study. Within a few weeks of arriving in Bella Coola, McIlwraith tried to employ Rivers’s signature methodology by collecting genealogies. But few Nuxalk could recall or were willing to share such information, confirming for McIlwraith that the culture was largely dead. He seems to have then rethought the salvage model in terms of the Cambridge ideals. Through the intensive study of a single people, he sought, in conjunction with Smith’s work on technology, to produce a comprehensive account of traditional Nuxalk culture. By modern standards, his notion of a comprehensive understanding, in which he would

make the Nuxalk “his people,” was very circumscribed. Learning the language, for instance, meant acquiring competence in Chinook jargon rather than in Nuxalk itself (by his own admission, McIlwraith had a poor ear for Nuxalk phonology). Gaining rapport with the people in effect meant gaining rapport with the elders, who were the custodians of the old culture, as, in McIlwraith’s view, the younger people had turned their backs on the past. And learning Nuxalk culture meant largely ignoring the contemporary lives of the people in favour of exploring the esoteric knowledge contained in the “memory culture” he elicited from a handful of old people.

McIlwraith’s Cambridge training had its greatest effect upon his attitude towards the data he was recording. This can best be illustrated by comparing his fieldwork to that of Franz Boas. Over the course of his many trips to the coast, Boas had developed an approach to salvage ethnography that focused upon the transcription of texts recited by Aboriginal informants, preferably in the vernacular. Most of his first generation of students pursued a similar strategy, with mixed success, depending upon their own linguistic abilities (Suttles and Joanaitis 1990, 80). Collecting texts was, for Boas, an end in itself, a means of presenting Aboriginal culture “as it appears to the Indian himself,” free from “contaminating” interpretations on the part of the ethnographer (Codere 1966, xv).¹⁰ McIlwraith also wrote down hundreds of myths, stories, anecdotes, and songs, but he did not accord them the same importance as did Boas and his students. In fact, he took a fairly casual approach to recording them. With the exception of song texts transcribed in the final weeks of his fieldwork, he wrote all of his fieldnotes in English interspersed with Chinook and Nuxalk words, even though his informants spoke to him solely in Chinook. His main object, the one he returned to repeatedly in his letters to Sapir and Haddon, was to discover the underlying logic of traditional Nuxalk religion and social organization. Cross-checking information between informants served not just to ensure accuracy but also to reveal general patterns. Some texts contributed directly to this larger analysis, but most were by-products of the basic method of salvage anthropology (texts are the easiest form of information to record from single informants) and, most significantly, the Nuxalk elders’ insistence that he write them down.¹¹ Historians of anthropology on the Northwest Coast have sometimes lumped McIlwraith in with the Boasians, in part because Sapir employed him and in part because so much of *The Bella Coola Indians* is taken up with texts (Barker 2000; Darnell 1998). But McIlwraith was no Boasian. Boas never managed to produce a coherent ethnography of a Northwest Coast people. McIlwraith did.

To sum up, the letters reveal McIlwraith as an extraordinarily focused, hard-working, and resourceful fieldworker. He did not break new methodological ground, but he did manage to stretch the boundaries of salvage ethnography by exploring the interrelations of key cultural elements as far as these could be traced in informants' testimonies. This research provided the basis for an exceptionally well-rounded and thorough account of a Northwest Coast culture, one "notable for demonstrating the relationship of myth, ceremony, and social organization" (Suttles and Joanaitis 1990, 81).

RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE: AN ALTERNATIVE READING

In his letters McIlwraith returns over and over again to themes of cultural abandonment and decay. He complains about how Christianity has contaminated Nuxalk religious thought and altered the rhythms of daily life; he finds that the gas lights of the community hall, built in White man's style, drain masked dances of much of their former splendour; he cringes at the contempt towards Nuxalk traditions coming from the lips of not only some of their White neighbours but also of young Nuxalk men; he is baffled by the Canadian government's uncompromising opposition to the potlatch, which has caused the Nuxalk to carry out in secret a much diminished form of the exchange. He is often moved to anger at the intolerance of "our so-called civilization" (TFM to family, 30 June



Eastern part of the village on the Bella Coola Indian reserve, 29 August 1920. The town hall on the right, next to the flag pole, provided the main venue for the winter ceremonies in 1923-4.

1922). At times he is even defiant, taking upon his own shoulders the burden of resisting the petty incursions of White authority that Nuxalk suffered every day. For example, he boasts to Haddon:

I have named babies (not to mention nursing the dirty and howling brats on all occasions), helped hide wine from the police, prevented a murder (out of respect for the intending murderer, NOT for the victim), helped in a potlatch (forbidden by law), taken part in horse-play in the village, helped old men with their salmon nets, put drunk Indians to bed, taken their part against the missionary, agreed emphatically that much in the white man's bible was wrong and inferior to their own religion, given my valuable (?) assistance to settling disputes, and done many other things that would be considered undignified by the majority of American anthropologists. (29 August 1922)

"In this kind of way," he adds, "I have made myself popular with most of the Indians and they showed it."

That these feelings came from a deep and sincere respect for the Nuxalk and their traditions cannot be doubted. McIlwraith was an uncomfortable witness to the devastating consequences of European conquest and the daily indignities Nuxalk continued to suffer in its colonial aftermath. Still, one can detect in passages such as the one I have just quoted another familiar theme – the White man who does not just penetrate the cultural "Other" but who is elevated by the Natives to be their leader: Kipling's "the man who would be king" or Captain Cook apotheosized in a Hawaiian god.¹² In such fables, as they are related by Europeans to each other, the White hero arrives at the moment before the exotic world of the Aborigines crumbles under the juggernaut of European civilization. McIlwraith hints at this fantasy in his letters on the winter ceremonies. He takes pride in his central role, asserting (incorrectly) that he was the first White man to perform in them and that his presence had made the 1922-3 ceremonies the best for many a year. In a letter to Harlan Smith, he goes further: "Thanks to these performances I feel that I am fairly well established with the community, so much so that I have had the pleasure of bawling out several Indians whom I dislike, a thing which last year I never dared to do." To be fair, such outbursts of boastfulness are rare and are more than balanced by self-deprecating jokes concerning his awkwardness as a performer. All the same, it is significant that McIlwraith was often tempted to imagine himself as something more than a student of Nuxalk culture, that he imagined himself as its representative.

Such passages suggest that, however critical McIlwraith may have been

of Canadian attitudes and policies towards Aboriginal peoples, he was not able to escape the underlying assumptions of his own class and culture. Nuxalk culture was doomed, its people unable to resist the pressures and enticements of the colonizer. Figures like Captain Schooner, whom he described as “the original, uncontaminated Bella Coola type,” stood alone, elderly and frail, impotent and bitter about the passing of the old ways (McIlwraith 1948 II, 525). Although “the individual may suffer,” McIlwraith insisted, “civilization must press onward and the life of the Indian will soon disappear” (1948 I, xlvi). Such fatalism, of course, provided salvage anthropology with both its justification and its urgency.

But Nuxalk culture did not disappear. For a time, its decline continued and even accelerated. In the early 1930s, a Nuxalk chief convinced the people to abandon the winter ceremonies and potlatch. Nuxalk children began to attend distant residential schools. The painfully familiar spiral of language and culture loss, attended by increasing alcohol and drug abuse and other forms of social disintegration, took their toll. But the Nuxalk continued to perform traditional dances on such special occasions as the celebration of the ending of the Second World War. The 1960s and 1970s witnessed a strong revival of Nuxalk carving, painting, dancing, and songs, culminating in the reinstatement of ceremonial potlatching in 1979 (Kennedy and Bouchard 1990; Stott 1975; Walmsley 1987). A Nuxalk elementary school now draws upon the elders of the community to teach children the rudiments of their language and ceremonial heritage. The House of Smayusta, created by Nuxalk hereditary chiefs, holds a resource library containing publications, reports, archival documents, and taped oral histories that serve as a base of traditional knowledge – knowledge that is essential to the revitalization of Nuxalk culture and the struggle to regain control over traditional lands. In an irony he would have appreciated, McIlwraith’s writings have played a central part in the Nuxalk revival. Indeed, some people refer to *The Bella Coola Indians* as the “Nuxalk Bible.”

Viewed retrospectively, in terms of the Nuxalk present and future, it is possible – indeed, imperative – to read McIlwraith’s correspondence differently from what he intended. The letters provide clues to the attitudes and to the way of life of the immediate ancestors of today’s elders at a critical time of transition. From this perspective, the “informants” McIlwraith writes about appear less as passive victims than as active participants in the unfolding of their own history. Consider Joshua Moody. McIlwraith thought that Moody’s interest in Christianity and White man’s knowledge in general had corrupted his understanding of Nuxalk traditions and thus represented a decline in traditional knowledge. In

retrospect, Moody's insistence on interpreting Christianity in terms of Nuxalk religious understanding is better understood as an endorsement of the latter and as a sign of its continuing relevance and vitality. In rising to the intellectual challenge of mission Christianity, Moody certainly altered his understanding of the spiritual beliefs he had been taught as a child. But this is surely a sign of a living culture, an indication of intellectual flexibility as well as of intellectual wonder.

And consider the controversies created by McIlwraith's requests to record traditions. The anthropologist recognized that the Nuxalk elders were very sensitive about ownership of stories, songs, and dances and, thus, about who had the right to allow them to be recorded. But he regarded the elders as "informants" whose disputes involved him only insofar as they created an impediment to his project – an impediment that had to be overcome. In retrospect, it is clear that the Nuxalk drew an unwitting McIlwraith into an ongoing politics of cultural ownership and reproduction. I think that the same is true of the dances. When I interviewed Nuxalk elders in 1990, I found that no one thought of McIlwraith as the successor to Captain Schooner, although they knew that he had participated in the winter ceremonials. This suggests that McIlwraith's adoption was a means of incorporating him into the dance rather than of creating a particular right for him. It would have been important for them to do this because, by this time, McIlwraith had come into possession of valuable cultural knowledge. By obliging him to support the ceremonials, the Nuxalk elders exercised a means of controlling him and assessing his intentions.

McIlwraith's own observations thus inadvertently lend supporting evidence that, even in the dark days of the early twentieth century, Nuxalk culture possessed an underlying vitality that continued to provide meaning to its people. Attuned to an imagined Nuxalk past, the anthropologist was unable to see clearly the present, let alone the future. He believed that the elders had given him their precious histories, mythologies, ceremonies, and other possessions because he had shown them respect and because they believed the younger generation was no longer interested in them. He was largely correct. The older Nuxalk who befriended him probably did believe that the old ways would soon disappear; they were probably no more able than was he to perceive the future. Still, from the perspective of the present, these elders appear not as "informants" but as teachers who wisely chose to incorporate a sympathetic young outsider into their circle despite the risks and the political tensions this move engendered. They, and previous generations of Nuxalk back to the time of creation, are the true authors of *The Bella Coola*

Indians. Rather than entombing the remains of a way of life soon to be forgotten, this book, like the anthropologist, is itself encompassed within and transformed by a vibrant, evolving culture. The Nuxalk have long claimed *The Bella Coola Indians* as their own. McIlwraith's letters lend further support to this act of reclamation.

NOTE ON TEXTS AND ANNOTATIONS

The letters reproduced here are held by the McIlwraith family, by the Canadian Ethnology Service at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, by the Cambridge University Library, and by the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. The 1922 letters were handwritten; most of those from 1923-4 were typed. McIlwraith's hand is quite clear, but some of the earlier letters are faint and hard to read. One letter is torn at the edge, rendering the text slightly incomplete. Such omissions and ambiguities have been noted in the text.

The editors have reproduced the letters as closely to their original holograph or type as possible. The following exceptions should be noted. First, in a very few cases, we have omitted material quite extraneous to the field experience. Summaries of the deleted passages are inserted in brackets when they concern academic matters. A few paragraphs of purely family concerns have been silently deleted. Second, "slips of the pen" – or of the typewriter key – have been silently corrected.

The annotations serve a number of purposes. They provide background information on people and places mentioned by McIlwraith as well as references to key historical developments that influenced the Nuxalk and, thus, his fieldwork (e.g., the campaign against the potlatch). We have also provided extensive cross-references to the text of *The Bella Coola Indians* (abbreviated as either "BCI I" or "BCI II," depending on the volume). Annotations are, of course, only useful to the extent that they enhance rather than detract from the main text. We hope we have been able to strike the right balance here.

The spelling of Nuxalk terms presents a special problem. As he began to learn Nuxalk words, McIlwraith experimented with different spellings, many of which are not consistent with the final versions in *The Bella Coola Indians*. To make matters more complicated, other anthropologists and linguists have recorded different variants of several of the key terms appearing in the letters and ethnography, and they have used quite distinct orthographies (see, for example, Nater 1984; Nater 1990). For the sake of simplicity, but likely at the cost of some accuracy, our annotations rely upon the spellings that appear in *The Bella Coola Indians*.

One delicate matter remains. McIlwraith's letters are still remarkably fresh and immediate after eighty years. But language usages shift over time, sometimes dramatically. Nowhere is this more obvious than with words such as "chink" and "nigger." While certainly not for polite society in the 1920s, such words are now among the most offensive racist slurs in the English language. There is nothing in the letters to suggest that, on the very few occasions he uses them (and never in reference to the Nuxalk, one might add), McIlwraith does so with conscious racist intent. After a great deal of consideration, the editors have decided to leave the words in to keep the letters as close to the originals as possible.

We have also included in this volume three short articles McIlwraith wrote about the Nuxalk shortly after the conclusion of his fieldwork. The first, "At Home with the Bella Coola Indians," is a popular journalistic piece, written for the *Toronto Sunday World* newspaper in August 1924. It describes McIlwraith's field experiences. Readers may want to start with it before plunging into the detail of the letters. The other two articles have not been previously published. McIlwraith read the first, "Certain Aspects of the Potlatch among the Bella Coola," before the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Toronto in August 1924. The last article reproduced here, "Observations on the Medical Lore of the Bella Coola Indians, British Columbia," was apparently written in the late 1920s. Besides the magisterial *The Bella Coola Indians*, McIlwraith published only two short papers on the Nuxalk (McIlwraith 1925; McIlwraith 1964).